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BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

Application Number: 10/006,089
Filing Date: December 06, 2001
Appellant(s): COLE, GARY

Robert C. Kowert
For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

This is in response to the amended appeal brief filed on May 15, 2008 appealing from the Office action mailed on October 31, 2007.

(1) Real Party in Interest

A statement identifying by name the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) Related Appeals and Interferences

The examiner is not aware of any related appeals, interferences, or judicial proceedings which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

(3) Status of Claims

The statement of the status of claims contained in the brief is correct.

(4) Status of Amendments After Final

The appellant's statement of the status of amendments after final rejection contained in the brief is correct. The response after final rejection filed on January 11, 2008 was entered but presented no amendments.

(5) Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The summary of claimed subject matter contained in the brief is correct.

(6) Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

The appellant's statement of the grounds of rejection to be reviewed on appeal is correct.

(7) Claims Appendix

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

(8) Evidence Relied Upon

5,724,575	HOOVER et al.	3-1998
6,269,405	DUTCHER et al.	7-2001

(9) Grounds of Rejection

The following ground(s) of rejection, set forth in the Office action mailed on October 31, 2007 and incorporated herein, are applicable to the appealed claims:

- Claims 1-4, 6, 8-12 and 14-33 stand finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,724,575 to Hoover et al. ("Hoover") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,269,405 to Dutcher et al. ("Dutcher").

Claim 1

Hoover teaches a system for managing information (see, for example, the abstract), comprising:

a software program stored on a computer-readable medium operable to maintain an identity index (see, for example, object location service 135 and map table 120 in FIG. 6, and column 23, lines 34-37, which shows that object location service 135 is operable to maintain map table 120, and see, for example, column 23, lines 8-11, which shows that map table 120 is an identity index), wherein said identity index comprises:

(a) a virtual identity (see, for example, map table 120 in FIG. 7, which shows a plurality of virtual identities).

Hoover further teaches that the virtual identity is for a user (see, for example, column 27, lines 34-37), and further teaches multiple computer resources at which information objects are located (see, for example, user computers 12 in FIG. 6, and see below). However, in the sense that the user is not necessarily an operator of the multiple computer resources, Hoover does not expressly disclose that the virtual identity is "for a user of multiple computer resources."

Nonetheless, Hoover further teaches that the information objects comprise user accounts (see, for example, column 27, lines 43-49, which shows an information object that comprises a person's account with an insurance company, health maintenance organization, etc.). One of ordinary skill in the art could apply the teachings of Hoover, with predictable results, to the user accounts of those who operate the multiple computer resources.

For example, in an analogous art, Dutcher describes a need for managing different user accounts on multiple, heterogeneous computer resources based on a single user account definition (see, for example, column 1, lines 37-47). Indeed, the teachings of Hoover enable the management of different, heterogeneous user databases on multiple computer resources based on a single, homogenous data model (see, for example, the abstract).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to implement the teachings of Hoover such that the virtual identity is "for a user of multiple computer resources," as Dutcher suggests.

Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches the virtual identity further comprising:

(i) a plurality of information object identifiers each corresponding to a respective information object (see, for example, column 24, lines 40-50, which shows a plurality of information object identifiers that each correspond to an information object); and

(ii) for each information object, a resource name identifying one of the multiple computer resources at which said respective information object is located, wherein said resource name is associated with said respective information object identifier (see, for example, column 24, lines 52-60, which shows a resource name "RDB1" associated with information object identifier "0011" that identifies a resource at which the information object is located); and

(b) a resource definition corresponding to each respective said named resource, wherein the resource definition further comprises connection information (see, for example, column 24, lines 52-60, which shows a resource definition corresponding to the resource that includes an object attribute table "OAT1," and column 25, lines 7-19, which further shows that the resource definition includes address or connection information).

Claim 2

The rejection of claim 1 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said resource definition further comprises a schema map (see, for example, column 27, lines 11-14, which shows that the object attribute table is a schema map).

Claim 3

The rejection of claim 2 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said schema map maps a resource attribute from said resource to a virtual attribute defined by said schema map (see, for example, column 27, lines 28-34, which shows that the object attribute table maps resource attributes to virtual attributes defined in the form of column headings).

Claim 4

The rejection of claim 3 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that a virtual attribute value for said virtual attribute is stored in RAM (see, for example, column 27, lines 14-18, which shows that the values of the virtual attributes in the object attribute table are stored in memory).

Claim 6

The rejection of claim 1 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said connection information contains a connection parameter selected from one of a hostname, a port, a resource username, a resource password or a resource type (see, for example, column 25, lines 12-16, which shows that the connection information includes parameters such as a hostname and port).

Claim 8

The rejection of claim 1 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said information object comprises a user account (see, for example, column 27, lines 34-49, which shows an information object that comprises a user account, such as a person's account with an insurance company, health maintenance organization, etc.).

Claim 9

The rejection of claim 8 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said information object identifier comprises an account name (see, for example, FIG. 9, which shows an information object identifier "0012" that comprises an account name such as "John Doe").

Claim 10

The rejection of claim 8 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said resource definition further comprises a schema map (see, for example, column 27, lines 11-14, which shows that the object attribute table is a schema map).

Claim 11

The rejection of claim 10 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said schema map maps a resource attribute from said resource to a virtual attribute defined by said schema map (see, for example, column 27, lines 28-34, which shows that the object attribute table maps resource attributes to virtual attributes defined in the form of column headings).

Claim 12

The rejection of claim 11 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that a virtual attribute value for said virtual attribute is maintained in RAM (see, for example, column 27, lines 14-18, which shows that the values of the virtual attributes in the object attribute table are stored in memory).

Claim 14

The rejection of claim 8 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said connection information contains a connection parameter selected from one of a hostname, a port, a resource username, a resource password or a resource type (see, for example, column 25, lines 12-16, which shows that the connection information includes parameters such as a hostname and port).

Claim 15

The rejection of claim 8 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said resource is one of a Unix system, a Windows NT system, an Oracle database system or an email server (see, for example, column 12, lines 61-63, which shows that the resource is a Unix system).

Claim 16

The rejection of claim 1 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said software program is operable to connect to said resource based on said resource definition (see, for example, column 25, lines 16-19, which shows that the software program connects to the resource based on the connection information).

Claim 17

The rejection of claim 1 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said resource definition further comprises a schema map (see, for example, column 27, lines 11-14, which shows that the object attribute table is a schema map); and

wherein, said software program is operable to create a composite view of said virtual identity based on said schema map (see, for example, column 25, lines 20-35, which shows creating a composite view of the virtual identity).

Claim 18

The rejection of claim 17 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said software program is operable to present a representation of said composite view in a

graphical user interface (see, for example, FIG. 24, which shows a representation of the composite view in a graphical user interface).

Claim 19

The rejection of claim 17 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that said graphical user interface is customizable (see, for example, column 52, lines 13-32, which shows that the graphical user interface is customizable).

Claim 20

Hoover teaches a system for managing information (see, for example, the abstract), comprising:

a software program stored on a computer-readable medium operable to maintain an identity index (see, for example, object location service 135 and map table 120 in FIG. 6, and column 23, lines 34-37, which shows that object location service 135 is operable to maintain map table 120, and see, for example, column 23, lines 8-11, which shows that map table 120 is an identity index), wherein said identity index comprises:

(a) a plurality of virtual identities (see, for example, map table 120 in FIG. 7, which shows a plurality of virtual identities), wherein each virtual identity corresponds to a user (see, for example, column 27, lines 34-37, which shows a virtual identity that corresponds to a user).

Hoover further teaches multiple computer resources at which information objects are located (see, for example, user computers 12 in FIG. 6, and see below). However, in the sense that the user to which the virtual identity corresponds is not necessarily an operator of the

multiple computer resources, Hoover does not expressly disclose that the virtual identity "corresponds to a user of multiple computer resources."

Nonetheless, Hoover further teaches that the information objects comprise user accounts (see, for example, column 27, lines 43-49, which shows an information object that comprises a person's account with an insurance company, health maintenance organization, etc.). One of ordinary skill in the art could apply the teachings of Hoover, with predictable results, to the user accounts of those who operate the multiple computer resources.

For example, in an analogous art, Dutcher describes a need for managing different user accounts on multiple, heterogeneous computer resources based on a single user account definition (see, for example, column 1, lines 37-47). Indeed, the teachings of Hoover enable the management of different, heterogeneous user databases on multiple computer resources based on a single, homogenous data model (see, for example, the abstract).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to implement the teachings of Hoover such that the virtual identity "corresponds to a user of multiple computer resources," as Dutcher suggests.

Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that each virtual identity further comprises:

(i) a plurality of information object identifiers, wherein each information object identifier corresponds to a respective information object (see, for example, column 24, lines 40-50, which shows a plurality of information object identifiers that each correspond to an information object); and

(ii) a plurality of resource names, wherein each resource name is associated with an information object identifier and each resource name corresponds to one of the multiple

computer resources at which the information object corresponding to the associated information object identifier is located (see, for example, column 24, lines 52-60, which shows a resource name "RDB1" associated with information object identifier "0011" that identifies a resource at which the information object is located); and

(b) a plurality of resource definitions comprising a resource definition for each named computer resource, wherein each resource definition comprises connection information for the corresponding named computer resource (see, for example, column 24, lines 52-60, which shows a resource definition corresponding to the resource that includes an object attribute table "OAT1," and column 25, lines 7-19, which further shows that the resource definition includes address or connection information).

Claim 21

The rejection of claim 20 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that each resource definition further comprises a schema map (see, for example, column 27, lines 11-14, which shows that the object attribute table is a schema map).

Claim 22

The rejection of claim 20 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that each information object comprises a user account (see, for example, column 27, lines 34-49, which shows an information object that comprises a user account, such as a person's account with an insurance company, health maintenance organization, etc.).

Claim 23

The rejection of claim 22 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that each information object identifier comprises an account name (see, for example, FIG. 9, which shows an information object identifier "0012" that comprises an account name such as "John Doe").

Claim 24

The rejection of claim 23 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that each resource definition further comprises a schema map (see, for example, column 27, lines 11-14, which shows that the object attribute table is a schema map).

Claim 25

The rejection of claim 24 is incorporated, and Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches that each said schema map maps a resource attribute from said resource to a virtual attribute defined by said schema map (see, for example, column 27, lines 28-34, which shows that the object attribute table maps resource attributes to virtual attributes defined in the form of column headings).

Claim 26

Hoover teaches a method of managing information (see, for example, the abstract), comprising:

storing an identity index comprising a plurality of information object identifiers corresponding to a set of information objects that define a user (see, for example, map table 120 in FIG. 6, and column 23, lines 8-11, which shows that map table 120 is an identity index, and see, for example, column 24, lines 40-50, which shows a plurality of information object

identifiers that each correspond to an information object, and column 27, lines 34-37, which shows an information object that defines a user).

Hoover further teaches multiple computer resources at which information objects are located (see, for example, user computers 12 in FIG. 6, and see below). However, in the sense that the user whom the information objects define is not necessarily an operator of the multiple computer resources, Hoover does not expressly disclose that the user is "a user of multiple computer resources."

Nonetheless, Hoover further teaches that the information objects comprise user accounts (see, for example, column 27, lines 43-49, which shows an information object that comprises a person's account with an insurance company, health maintenance organization, etc.). One of ordinary skill in the art could apply the teachings of Hoover, with predictable results, to the user accounts of those who operate the multiple computer resources.

For example, in an analogous art, Dutcher describes a need for managing different user accounts on multiple, heterogeneous computer resources based on a single user account definition (see, for example, column 1, lines 37-47). Indeed, the teachings of Hoover enable the management of different, heterogeneous user databases on multiple computer resources based on a single, homogenous data model (see, for example, the abstract).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to implement the teachings of Hoover such that the user is "a user of multiple computer resources," as Dutcher suggests.

Hoover in view of Dutcher further teaches:

associating a resource definition with each information object identifier, wherein each resource definition corresponds to a different one of the multiple computer resources at which the information object corresponding to the associated information object identifier is located, and wherein each resource definition contains connection information for the corresponding computer resource (see, for example, column 24, lines 52-60, which shows a resource definition associated with information object identifier "0011" and corresponding to a resource at which the information object is located that includes an object attribute table "OAT1," and column 25, lines 7-19, which further shows that the resource definition includes address or connection information).

Claim 27

The rejection of claim 26 is incorporated, and Hoover in view Dutcher further teaches that each information object identifier from said plurality of information object identifiers comprises a native key for the corresponding information object (see, for example, column 24, lines 8-16, which shows that the information object identifiers comprise native keys for the corresponding information objects).

Claim 28

The rejection of claim 27 is incorporated, and Hoover in view Dutcher further teaches that said native key comprises an account name (see, for example, FIG. 9, which shows an information object identifier "0012" that comprises an account name such as "John Doe").

Claim 29

The rejection of claim 26 is incorporated, and Hoover in view Dutcher further teaches that said associating a resource definition with each information object identifier further comprises associating at least one resource name with each information object identifier (see, for example, column 24, lines 52-60, which shows a resource name "RDB1" associated with information object identifier "0011").

Claim 30

The rejection of claim 26 is incorporated, and Hoover in view Dutcher further teaches that each information object comprises a user account (see, for example, column 27, lines 34-49, which shows an information object that comprises a user account, such as a person's account with an insurance company, health maintenance organization, etc.).

Claim 31

The rejection of claim 26 is incorporated, and Hoover in view Dutcher further teaches that each resource definition further comprises a schema map (see, for example, column 27, lines 11-14, which shows that the object attribute table is a schema map).

Claim 32

The rejection of claim 31 is incorporated, and Hoover in view Dutcher further teaches that said schema map maps a resource attribute to a virtual attribute (see, for example, column 27, lines 28-34, which shows that the object attribute table maps resource attributes to virtual attributes defined in the form of column headings).

Claim 33

The rejection of claim 31 is incorporated, and Hoover in view Dutcher further teaches creating a composite view of a user based on said schema map from each resource definition (see, for example, column 25, lines 20-35, which shows creating a composite view of a user).

(10) Response to Arguments

At the outset, for clarity, the examiner notes that in a previous decision on appeal mailed on January 26, 2007, the Board directed the examiner's attention to the Hoover reference. The Hoover reference was subsequently relied upon in an anticipation rejection of Appellant's pending claims. In response, Appellant amended the claims (with claim 1 as an example) to specify that the recited virtual identity is "for a user of multiple computer resources" and that the recited resource name identifies "one of the multiple computer resources." Consequently, the Dutcher reference was relied upon in combination with the Hoover reference to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

"Hoover in view of Dutcher fails to teach or suggest an identity index including a virtual identity as recited in Applicants' claim" (brief, pages 11-12).

Appellant contends that the examiner is confusing the "data about people" in Hoover with a virtual identity for a user a multiple computer resources that includes a resource name identifying one of the multiple computer resources at which the respective information is located (brief, page 11).

However, the examiner respectfully submits that there is no confusion. Hoover teaches an "identity index" in the form of map table 120 (see FIG. 7 and column 23, lines 8-12). The map table 120 comprises a "virtual identity" that includes a plurality of information object

identifiers (e.g., "0011") and for each information object, a resource name (e.g., "RDB1") identifying one of the multiple computer resources at which the respective information object is located (see column 24, lines 40-60). The information objects are located at multiple computer resources, such as at user computers 12 (see FIG. 6).

As Appellant implies, the information objects include "data about people." Indeed, the virtual identity of Hoover is "for a user" at least in the sense that the information objects describe a person (see column 27, lines 34-37). Nonetheless, in the sense that the people described in the information objects are not necessarily the actual "users" of the computer resources, Hoover does not explicitly disclose Appellant's intended use of the virtual identity as "for a user of [the] multiple computer resources." Importantly, however, Hoover teaches each and every structural element recited in claim 1. The structure described in Hoover is capable of providing a virtual identity that is "for a user of [the] multiple computer resources."

Appellant contends that in Hoover, the users of the computer resources are the employees of the healthcare-related service providers. Appellant refers to the "add_PERSON" message described in Hoover and concludes that Hoover explicitly teaches that the user of the computer resources is not the person who is associated with any particular object identity or object attribute (brief, page 12).

However, the examiner respectfully submits that Appellant's representation of Hoover is incomplete. Hoover describes the "add_PERSON" message at column 29, lines 46-57:

> For example, the following message might be used to add an instance of a person, assuming the object model of FIG. 5 and the attributes for inclusion in the object attribute table (OAT) 140 in FIG. 9:
>
> add_PERSON (MyPassword, Last_Name, MI, First_Name, B-day, Marital Status, Address)

> The security parameter "MyPassword" indicates a security password for the user initiating the operation, which of course is unrelated to the information associated with the person whose demographics are being added.

In other words, the "add_PERSON" message is a command that an administrator could use to add a person (an "information object") to the database. Hoover merely describes exactly what one of ordinary skill in the art would expect—that the administrator must provide his or her own password to add the person. Such a teaching does not imply that Hoover is incapable of providing a virtual identity "for a user of [the] multiple computer resources."

"The Examiner's interpretation of the Hoover's account information is incorrect" (brief, pages 13-14).

Appellant contends that Hoover specifically and explicitly states at column 29, lines 46-57 that the information stored in the database is not for, about, or even related to the healthcare professionals that use the databases (brief, page 13).

However, as indicated above, what Hoover actually describes at column 29, lines 46-57 is that the administrator (or healthcare professional) provides his or her own password to add information about a person to the database. The use of an administrative password does not preclude or prevent one from employing the virtual identity system of Hoover to store information about the actual users of the computer resources.

Appellant contends that the examiner is incorrectly equating any person with a "business-style account" with, specifically, a computer user of a database storing information about such accounts (brief, page 13).

However, the examiner respectfully submits that Appellant is presenting a straw man argument. The examiner's position is that the information objects of Hoover describe "user accounts" in the sense that the information objects describe health insurance accounts and other related healthcare accounts (see column 27, lines 43-49). The examiner is not conflating these types of accounts with computer user accounts. The Dutcher reference describes computer user accounts (see, for example, the abstract).

"Dutcher does not overcome the deficiencies of Hoover" (brief, pages 14-15).

Appellant contends that Dutcher does not include any data structure that can be considered a virtual identity for a user of multiple computer resources that includes, among other things, a resource name identifying one of the multiple computer resources at which the respective information object is located (brief, page 14).

However, as indicated above, Hoover teaches a data structure in the form of map table 120 (see FIG. 7 and column 23, lines 8-12) comprising a "virtual identity" that includes a plurality of information object identifiers (e.g., "0011") and for each information object, a resource name (e.g., "RDB1") identifying one of the multiple computer resources at which the respective information object is located (see column 24, lines 40-60). The information objects are located at multiple computer resources, such as at user computers 12 (see FIG. 6).

"The Examiner's combination of Hoover and Dutcher does not result in a system that includes all the limitations of Applicants' claim" (brief, pages 15-16).

Appellant contends that no combination of Hoover and Dutcher would include the virtual identity recited in the claims (brief, page 15).

However, the examiner notes that the test for obviousness is not that the claimed invention must be expressly suggested in any one or all of the references. Rather, the test is what the combined teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981). Combining the teachings of references does not involve an ability to combine the specific structures of the references. See *In re Nievelt*, 482 F.2d 965, 179 USPQ 224, 226 (CCPA 1973).

Appellant states that modifying Hoover in view of Dutcher would not change the nature or structure of Hoover's database (brief, page 15). Conversely, Appellant does not agree that the structure of Hoover's system is capable of performing Appellant's intended use of the virtual identity as "for a user of [the] multiple computer resources" (brief, page 16).

However, the examiner notes that the claimed subject matter differs from Hoover only in terms of the "content" of the information objects. Specifically, Hoover teaches each and every structural element recited in claim 1. Hoover is clearly directed to a "system for managing information" (see, for example, the abstract). Hoover teaches a "software program" such as recited in the claim in the form of object location service 135 (see FIG. 6 and column 23, lines 34-37). Hoover further teaches an "identity index" in the form of map table 120 (see FIG. 7 and column 23, lines 8-12). The map table 120 comprises a "virtual identity" that includes a plurality of information object identifiers (e.g., "0011") and for each information object, a resource name (e.g., "RDB1") identifying one of the multiple computer resources at which the respective information object is located (see column 24, lines 40-60). The information objects are located

at multiple computer resources, such as at user computers 12 (see FIG. 6). Hoover further teaches a "resource definition" (see column 24, lines 52-60) that comprises "connection information" (see column 25, lines 7-19).

As noted above, Appellant's intended use of the virtual identity is "for a user of [the] multiple computer resources." Accordingly, each information object "comprises a user account," such as recited in dependent claim 8. In other words, Appellant's information objects describe computer user accounts. Hoover's information objects describe health insurance accounts and other related healthcare accounts. Thus, the claimed subject matter differs from Hoover only in terms of the "content" of the information objects.

Nonetheless, the virtual identity system of Hoover is capable of providing a virtual identity "for a user of [the] multiple computer resources." One of ordinary skill in the art could, with predictable results, implement the virtual identity system of Hoover such that the information objects describe computer user accounts rather than healthcare accounts. The Dutcher reference is evidence that such computer user accounts were known in the art. Appellant's statement that combining the teachings of the references would not change the structure of Hoover's system supports the examiner's position that the structure of Hoover's system is capable of providing information objects that describe computer user accounts. The teachings of Hoover are not strictly confined to the healthcare industry.

"There is no reason why one would combine Hoover and Dutcher as suggested by the Examiner" (brief, pages 16-18).

Appellant notes that Dutcher provides a system for managing different user accounts and concludes that there is no valid reason why one would modify the system of Hoover to include the teachings of Dutcher (brief, page 16).

However, one rationale to support the conclusion of obviousness is that Dutcher describes a need for managing different computer user accounts on multiple, heterogeneous computer resources based on a single account definition (see, for example, column 1, lines 37-47). Hoover describes a virtual identity system that enables one to manage different, heterogeneous user databases on multiple computer resources based on a single, homogenous data model (see, for example, the abstract). As one of ordinary skill in the art would appreciate, the virtual identity system of Hoover is capable of providing a solution to the described need for managing different computer user accounts on multiple, heterogeneous computer resources based on a single account definition (i.e., based on a single, homogenous data model). The fact that Dutcher describes another solution is not evidence of nonobviousness.

Appellant contends that Hoover's system "purposefully" does not store user account information, and that even if Hoover's system were modified to store information about computer user accounts, the user account information stored in the database would still be unrelated to any information about the users of the database (brief, page 17).

However, the examiner respectfully submits that Appellant's arguments are an overstatement of Hoover's teachings. Appellant repeatedly refers to column 29, lines 46-57 of Hoover as the basis for such arguments. However, what Hoover actually teaches here is merely that the administrator must provide his or her own password to add information to the database using the "add_PERSON" message. The password "of course is unrelated to the information"

that the administrator is adding to the database. Significantly, the teachings of Hoover do not imply that the database is incapable of storing information about the administrator or another user of the database, let alone that the database is incapable of storing information about computer user accounts.

Appellant refers to an example proffered in the advisory action mailed on February 28, 2008 and contends that the examiner's statement supports Appellant's argument (brief, page 18).

However, the examiner disagrees. The point is that in any system such as Hoover's, an administrator would provide his or her own password to add information to the database regardless of what that information encompasses. Even if the administrator were adding information about another actual user of the database, the administrator would still provide his or her own password to do so. In other words, even if Hoover's database were to store computer user account information, the administrator would still provide his or her own password to add another computer user account to the database. Hoover's description confirms that the administrator is not necessarily the same person whose information is added to the database, but does not preclude or prevent such a scenario. Hoover does not "teach away" from providing a virtual identity that is "for a user of [the] multiple computer resources."

"Hoover in view of Dutcher fails to teach or suggest wherein the information comprises a user account" (brief, pages 18-19).

In response to Appellant's arguments, the examiner respectfully submits that Appellant is conflating a general "user account" with what the examiner is referring to as a "computer user account." The information objects of Hoover describe general user accounts. Appellant

previously referred to such accounts as "business-style accounts." Indeed, the people described with the PERSON object attribute table of Hoover are "users" of the healthcare services that Hoover describes. Accordingly, the information objects of Hoover that describe health insurance accounts and other related healthcare accounts are reasonably considered to "comprise a user account." Still, the examiner appreciates that because the "user" recited in Appellant's claims is a "user of multiple computer resources," the recited "user account" is reasonably interpreted as a computer user account. Consequently, the examiner relied upon the Dutcher reference. Dutcher specifically teaches computer user accounts.

"Hoover in view of Dutcher fails to teach or suggest wherein said software program is operable to create a composite view of the virtual identity based on said schema map" (brief, page 20).

Appellant acknowledges that Hoover teaches gathering information to perform a "cross server join" of the data, but contends that Hoover in view of Dutcher does not teach or suggest creating a composite view of the virtual identity based on a schema map (brief, page 20).

However, the basis of Appellant's argument is merely the supposition that the virtual identity of Hoover is not "for a user of [the] multiple computer resources." Hoover describes that the "cross server join" assembles a "complete snapshot" of information from multiple computer resources (see column 25, lines 20-35). In other words, the "cross server join" creates a composite view of the information. The combined teachings of Hoover and Dutcher would have suggested creating a composite view of information "for a user of [the] multiple computer resources" to those of ordinary skill in the art.

"Hoover in view of Dutcher fails to teach or suggest where the graphical user interface is customizable" (brief, pages 20-21).

In response to Appellant's arguments, the examiner respectfully points out that Appellant's claims fail to specify what part of the graphical user interface is customizable or how the graphical user interface is customized. Hoover illustrates a graphical user interface in FIGS. 20-27. The graphical user interface of Hoover is "customizable" at least in the sense that the user may customize the display of different screens in the graphical user interface. For example, the user may press the Update button 534 on the Add Person screen 530 to display the Update Person screen 550 in the graphical user interface (see column 52, lines 13-17). Furthermore, the user may customize the information displayed in the Update Person screen in order to change the data stored in the system (see column 52, lines 21-32).

Moreover, Appellant notes that Hoover states that the Add Person screen includes a plurality of different fields of information typically used in the healthcare industry (brief, page 21). In fact, Hoover also states, "Other fields of information may occur to those skilled in the art" (column 51, lines 60-61). Hoover's statement suggests that the Add Person screen is customizable to include other fields of information.

(11) Related Proceeding(s) Appendix

No decision rendered by a court or the Board is identified by the examiner in the Related Appeals and Interferences section of this examiner's answer.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.

Respectfully submitted,

/Michael J. Yigdall/
Examiner
Art Unit 2192

Conferees:

/Tuan Q. Dam/
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